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Three Cal Poly Students Named National 'Anti-Hazing Heroes'

DENVER, Colo. -- A national organization dedicated to ending the practice of hazing among students has named three Cal Poly students among its six 2009 "Anti-Hazing Heroes."

HazingPrevention.org, under the sponsorship of the national Phi Delta Theta Fraternity, recognizes the students and professionals who take action towards a hazing-free future, by naming them Anti-Hazing Heroes. This year one professional and five students received this honor.

The three Cal Poly students receiving the honor are Andrew Righter, Daniel Kim and Jacob Lopez.

Andrew Righter is the Vice President of **Tau Kappa Epsilon** at Cal Poly, and was formerly President of the chapter. After only a few of months of membership, the President of Andrew's chapter was ousted due to hazing that took place under his leadership. The chapter needed a new President, and Andrew stepped up. As a first year student, many people didn't feel he was ready, but he proved them wrong. He eliminated hazing from the chapter's new member program, and was the recipient of the Most Outstanding Greek President at Cal Poly award. "I'm proud of the fact that I was able to make my fraternity much better then when I joined. I attribute much of my success in that to Adrian Herrera (2007 Anti-Hazing Hero) and UIFI," said Righter.

Daniel Kim served in many leadership roles at Cal Poly, but demonstrated his strongest leadership in a role that doesn't often have the greatest visibility – Associate Member Counselor for his fraternity, **Delta Chi**. As one of only a few members who saw hazing as detrimental, he tried to bring the practice to an end. Daniel eventually reached his brothers through an impassioned speech presenting the facts, pros and cons of hazing. "I have learned that change comes gradually," Kim said. "Especially when dealing with issues that are deeply rooted in a chapter's history and tradition. I have had plenty of struggles of whether being involved was what I wanted, but realized that if I simply quit, there would be no one to fight for what was truly right."

Jacob Lopez initially left his fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon, due to hazing, but returned to make great change. After being hazed as a new member, Lopez announced his resignation from the fraternity. Following much pleading from his closest friends, he agreed to come back only if no hazing would occur again. Lopez stepped into The New Member Educator position and, within two weeks, he created a new hazing-free program for the Fall 2007 class. The new program manages to include the old traditions without hazing. Despite resistance from older chapter members, the fraternity has been able to maintain a non-hazing new member education program. Lopez's courage has led him to the role of current chapter President for TKE at Cal Poly.

[Read the Jan. 15 SLO Tribune story about the students](#)

Others recognized this year as Anti-Hazing Heroes are:

Christina Covington, National President of Alpha Sigma Tau sorority. She was instrumental in establishing AST as

a founding member of the Anti-Hazing Hotline (1-888-NOT-HAZE), and for making this number accessible through sorority publications including a revised new member handbook. She was nominated for her “unrelenting passion to eradicate hazing from the sorority, and to demonstrate our values and behavior by example to our Greek colleagues.”

Bill Gibson. As Gibson prepares to graduate from the University of Montana, he leaves knowing his chapter of Sigma Nu Fraternity is a better place than when he pledged. With assistance from the national organization, Bill helped to develop a candidate program based on the Fraternity’s values, rooted in the organization’s LEAD program, and incorporating constructive team building. Bill endured threats and overcame much adversity to set the chapter on the “right track.” Bill said, “This award is really for the chapter, as a whole, for doing the hard work to make these changes.”

Wallace McKinney. McKinney witnessed the hazing of a freshman by one of his brothers. Wallace stepped in on the spot and asked the brother to apologize, and then turned the brother into Standards Board, where the leadership of the chapter removed the member and took his badge. Wallace’s chapter had been found responsible for hazing in the fall of 2007, and he was determined that it would not happen again. Wallace’s nominator and Greek advisor said that as President of the Alabama Mu chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at Auburn University, Wallace has changed the culture of his fraternity.

HazingPrevention.Org’s mission is to empower individuals - through collaboration and education - to expect and create groups that value human dignity. Hazing is any action taken or situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule; or risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of an organization or team. It is still considered hazing whether or not a member is considered ‘new’ and regardless of the person’s willingness to participate. For more information, go to: www.hazingprevention.org

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